

subject application at page 5, beginning at line 13 to clarify that within the scope of nonwoven web materials to which the invention applies are coform materials and fibrous materials. Support for this amendment can be found, for example, at page 33, line 12 of the specification and at page 36, lines 16-21 of the specification. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully urged that this amendment incorporates no new subject matter into the application and is fully supported by the application as originally filed.

Applicants have also amended the description of the invention claimed in the subject application beginning at page 34, line 1 to more clearly indicate the disposition of the gelling agent utilized in the claimed invention on the cover-facing portion of the absorbent core. That is, the upper airlaid layer of the absorbent core has been indicated to correspond to the cover-facing portion of the absorbent core.

Claim 6 of the subject application has been amended so as to more generically described disposition of at least one treatment chemistry on the absorbent layer. Specifically, Claim 6 has been amended to indicate that the at least one treatment chemistry is disposed along a peripheral region of the absorbent layer. Support for this amendment can be found, for example, in Figs. 6 and 7 of the application where the treatment chemistry is shown as being along the edges or ends of the absorbent layer of an absorbent article. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully

urge that this amendment is fully supported by the application as originally filed and incorporates no new subject matter into the application.

Claim 12 has been amended by adding coform materials and fibrous webs as being potential elements of a nonwoven web material suitable for use in an absorbent article in accordance with embodiments of this invention. As discussed in connection with the amendment of the description, this amendment is fully supported by the application as originally filed.

Claim 27 has been amended to indicate that the treatment agent, in addition to being disposed within at least a portion of the absorbent layer of the absorbent article, may also be disposed on the absorbent layer, as well as on or within the fluid permeable cover and the fluid impervious baffle. Support for this amendment can be found, for example, in Claim 5 of the application as originally filed. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully urge that this amendment is fully supported by the application as originally filed.

In addition to the amendment to Claims 6, 12 and 27, Applicants have added new Claims 44-50 to further recite additional embodiments of the invention disclosed in the subject application. Claim 44 states that the at least one treatment chemistry is applied to the opposed edges and/or the opposed ends and/or the center region of the absorbent layer and support for this claim is shown in the drawings.

Claim 45 states that the absorbent article comprises two opposed side wings to which at least one treatment agent is applied. Such side wings are shown, for example, in Fig. 6 of the application and application of the at least one treatment chemistry thereto is supported, for example, at page 35, lines 11-12 of the description. Claim 46 states that the at least one treatment chemistry is disposed on at least a portion of the fluid permeable cover and/or the fluid impervious baffle, support for which can be found at page 35, lines 5-10 of the description. Claims 47 and 48 are directed to disposition of the treatment chemistry on the absorbent layer; Claim 49 relates to disposition of a treatment chemistry on the side wings of absorbent article; and Claim 50 identifies the treatment chemistry of Claim 49 as being a cross-linking gelling agent and/or a thickening agent.

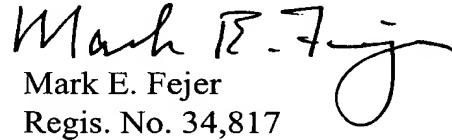
Applicants respectfully request entry of the above Preliminary Amendment to put this application in better condition for examination. Applicants respectfully urge that this Preliminary Amendment is fully supported by the application as originally filed and, thus, incorporates no new subject matter into the application.

Serial No.: 09/859,665

Docket No.: KCC-15,512

Applicants sincerely believe that this application is in condition for examination, and early allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


Mark E. Fejer
Regis. No. 34,817

Pauley Petersen Kinne & Fejer
2800 West Higgins Road
Suite 365
Hoffman Estates, Illinois 60195
(847) 490-1400; FAX (847) 490-1403



VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification:

Page 5, beginning at line 13:

Nonwoven web materials of this invention include, but are not limited in any way to, spunbond materials, meltblown materials, bonded carded web materials, air laid materials, bonded and unbonded pulp materials, coform materials, fibrous materials such as fluff and combinations thereof, for example, multilayer materials and laminates.

Page 34, beginning at line 1:

In accordance with one embodiment of this invention, the gelling and thickening agents are applied in a pattern within a nonwoven material, thereby enabling two types of fluid control within the component. In accordance with another embodiment of this invention, the gelling and thickening agents are employed in specific areas of the absorbent article so as to restrict fluid movement within the article. As shown in Fig. 5, the gelling agent 102 may be disposed in a central location of the absorbent 101 of a feminine care product 100 to improve overall containment of menses, and therefore capacity, in that region of the product. As shown in Fig. 6, a gelling agent 105 may be disposed alongside or within the edges of the absorbent core 104 of a feminine care absorbent article 103, thereby gelling

menses that is insulted or wicked into this area. In this manner, an effective barrier to fluid flow beyond the edge of the absorbent is created. Similarly, as shown in Fig. 7, gelling agents 108 may be located alongside or within the end of the absorbent core 107 of an absorbent article 106 to create an effective fluid barrier at the ends of the absorbent core. The gelling agent may be varied in the z-direction of the product. The gelling agent may also be disposed only in the cover or upper airlaid layer (cover-facing portion of the absorbent core) to control stain size or in the middle or lower layers of a multi-layer absorbent to impart the barrier function for leakage prevention. Other types of patterning, such as the application to either the cover or the absorbent of the thickening or gelling agent in a checkerboard pattern, could be employed whereby fluid encountering the areas that contain the thickening or gelling agent would start to gel while still permitting the fluid flow through the areas that did not contain the gelling agent. Fig. 8 shows an absorbent article 109 having a cover 111, an absorbent 110, an internal partial barrier 112, a baffle 114 and a backsheet 113 with placement of gelling agents 112 in a central region or within a relatively open, low basis weight component of the absorbent article 109 to eliminate or slow wicking of fluid to a component disposed therebelow. By slowing the movement of the fluid to the bottom layer, the integrity of the bottom layer is preserved and overall product shape is maintained throughout the wear time of the product.

In the Claims:

6. A method in accordance with Claim 5, wherein said at least one treatment chemistry is disposed along [opposed edges] a peripheral region of said absorbent layer.

12. A method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said absorbent article comprises a nonwoven web material selected from the group consisting of airlaid, coform, spunbond, meltblown, bonded carded web, non-bonded pulp, bonded pulp, fibrous webs and combinations thereof.

27. In an absorbent article comprising an absorbent layer having a first surface and a second surface, a fluid permeable cover disposed adjacent said first surface, a fluid impervious baffle disposed adjacent said second surface, the improvement comprising:

at least one treatment chemistry selected from the group consisting of cross-linking gelling agents, thickening agents, agglutinating agents, plasma precipitators, mucolytic agent, lysing agents and combinations thereof disposed at least one of on and within at least a portion of at least one of said fluid permeable cover, said absorbent layer and said fluid impervious baffle.

Please add the following new claims:

44. (New) A method in accordance with Claim 6, wherein said at least one treatment chemistry is applied to at least one of opposed edges, opposed ends and a center region of said absorbent layer.

45. (New) A method in accordance with Claim 5, wherein said absorbent article comprises at least two opposed side wings to which said at least one treatment agent is applied.

46. (New) An absorbent article in accordance with Claim 27, wherein said at least one treatment chemistry is disposed on at least a portion of one of said fluid permeable cover and said fluid impervious baffle.

47. (New) An absorbent article in accordance with Claim 27, wherein said at least one treatment chemistry is disposed on at least one of a peripheral region and a center region of said absorbent layer.

48. (New) An absorbent article in accordance with Claim 47, wherein said peripheral region comprises opposed edges and opposed ends of said absorbent

Serial No.: 09/859,665

Docket No.: KCC-15,512

layer.

49. (New) An absorbent article in accordance with Claim 27 further comprising opposed side wings to which said at least one treatment chemistry is applied.

50. (New) An absorbent article in accordance with Claim 49, wherein said at least one treatment chemistry is one of said cross-linking gelling agent and said thickening agent.